Nothing a Little Body Language Can’t Fix

By Camiel King

2/16/16

ABSTRACT:

This paper is on describing how different types of body language shown by teachers can have different effects on students. It gives examples on what and what not to do as a teacher and what to look for in their students’ body language that tell them that they either are intrigued or don’t care.

KEY WORDS: *Body Language*

Nothing a Little Body Language Can’t Fix

Everyone knows one teacher that used bored them to sleep in class. What made that teacher so boring or hard to listen to? Could it have been the sound of their voice or the way that they spoke? Did they talk *at* the students and not *to* them? There have been studies done on those questions, all of which revolve around one thing; does the teacher’s body language affect the students’ ability to learn? Many would argue that a teacher who cannot present their material to their students in a way that they can understand means that they must not know enough about what they are teaching. On the other hand, there are many smart and talented teachers that have trouble putting their vast amounts of knowledge on a subject into words that their students’ would be able to understand. Some students don’t care about the subject unless the teacher gives them some reason to care about it. A way that teachers show that they care is through good body language.

Having good body language is very important. According to Michael Linsin (2009), a teacher’s speaking impacts students by 7%. “The other 93% is attributed to non-verbal communication” (par. 7). How teacher presents themselves in the classroom tells a student whether or not the student should pay attention. Teal Ruland (2015) gives tips on ways to improve teachers’ body language. These tips are very eye opening on the different ways a teacher can make or break it in the classroom.

There can be a thing as having too much movement in a teacher to the point that it is distracting to the students. A study performed by a pair of Stanford students reviled that teachers that move too much have students with poor test scores (Carey, 2014, par. 11). This shows that teachers have to find that fine line between having too much movement or too little, both are examples of having negative body language.

An essay by Tammy S. Gregersen shows many helpful diagrams that give examples of good and bad body language. Examples of these diagrams would be showing how frowning or scowling negatively effects the students (p. 57) and how smiling positively effects students.

To conclude, there are many different ways that teachers can portray how they feel through their body language. Teachers sometimes accidentally make certain facial expressions that confuse or interfere with their learning.

Works Cited

Carey, Bjorn (24 Jul. 2014). *Stanford scientists identify body language tied to creativity,*

*learning*. Retrieved from <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2014/july/virtual-reality-innovation-072414.html>

Gregersen, Tammy S. *Language learning beyond words: Incorporating body language into*

*classroom activities.* Retrieved from

<http://www.nus.edu.sg/celc/publications/RELT61/p51to64gregersen.pdf>

Henry, Julie (13 Feb. 2010). *Teachers get lessons in body language.* Retrieved from

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/7229102/Teachers-get-lessons-in->

body-language.html

Karadag, Engin, Nihat Caliskan, Rustu Yesil (Dec. 2008). *Developing the Evaluation Scale to*

*Determine the Impact of Body Language in an Argument: Reliability & Validity Analysis.*

Retrieved from <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail/detail?sid=ccc24d89-5605-4006->

b6a6-2345c071c894%40sessionmgr111&vid=0&hid=109&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2

ZQ%3d%3d#AN=508019399&db=eft

Linsin, Michael (7 Sep. 2009). *Body Language And Classroom Management*. Retrieved from

<http://www.smartclassroommanagement.com/2009/09/07/body-language-and-classroom-management/>

Ruland, Teal (2015). *Good Body Language Improves Classroom Management: Successful*

*Teachers Blend both Verbal and Nonverbal Communication.* Retrieved from

[www.nea.org/tools/52227.htm](http://www.nea.org/tools/52227.htm)